

IN REPLY REFER TO:  
NCPC File No. 6724

January 7, 2013

Ms. Circe M. Torruellas  
Program Analyst  
Mass Transit Administration  
District Department of Transportation  
55 M Street, SE, Suite 400  
Washington, DC 20003

Re: DC Streetcar - Benning Road Streetcar Extension Feasibility Study

Dear Ms. Torruellas:

The National Capital Planning Commission (NCPC) appreciates the opportunity to review and comment on the Benning Road Streetcar Extension Feasibility Study (Benning Study). We recognize that an extension of the H Street line Streetcar to the Minnesota or Capitol Heights Station would improve mobility, but we have concerns about the potential impact on environmental and historic resources. We request that all streetcar segments, including alternatives in the Benning Study process, are analyzed for both their citywide and localized impacts to character-defining features of the National Capital.

The Benning Study should more clearly document the potential impacts on East Capitol Street and Fort Circle Park System. An overhead catenary system, substation or other facility could adversely impact the vista of East Capitol Street, a major element of the L'Enfant Plan. We are also concerned about potential impacts on national parkland. The Benning Study includes streetcar alignments that would run adjacent to Fort Mahan Park, and the streetcar could impair connectivity of the Fort Circle Parks proposed in the CapitolSpace Plan. The Plan was developed through a partnership among NCPC, NPS, DPR, and DCOP, and the recommendation to establish a greenway by linking Fort Mahan and other Fort Circle Parks is one of the plan's key recommendations.

Under the National Capital Planning Act, 40 U.S.C. §§8711, the Commission has authority "to advise and consult in preliminary and successive stages on plans and programs for proposed District of Columbia ("District") projects outside the Central Area." As the federal government's planning agency for the National Capital Region, NCPC shares the District of Columbia's goal of developing and maintaining a multi-modal transportation system that meets the needs of residents, workers, and visitors. We look forward to working with DDOT on efforts to extend the H Street Streetcar line.

Ms. Circe M. Torruellas

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Information on our submission guidelines can be found on our website, [www.ncpc.gov](http://www.ncpc.gov). Please feel free to contact Michael Weil at (202) 482-7253 if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Christine Saum". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large initial "C" and a long, sweeping underline.

Christine Saum

Director, Urban Design and Plan Review